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SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/EU: CROATIA CONDITIONALITY

REF: A. SECSTATE 127023  
[1](#)B. FALLS-EUR/ERA EMAIL 12-1-08

Classified By: A/DCM Andrew C. Mann for reasons 1.5(b,d)

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Ahead of the December 8-9 GAERC, the Dutch are pleased by the draft conclusions on enlargement but concerned about Croatia's cooperation on war crimes issues. The Dutch support progress on WTO negotiations and active responses to the situations in Africa, Kosovo, and elsewhere. For the European Council December 11-12, the Dutch expect the EU to adopt a climate and energy package, and they will urge caution with the European economic stimulus package. The Dutch support the adoption of a new European security strategy in the hopes that it will be "operational" rather than "put in a drawer." END SUMMARY.

GAERC  
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[1](#)2. (C) EU Enlargement -- Post shared reftel A points with key MFA contacts and reported the Dutch MFA's letter to parliament on the EU GAERC Qd European Council meetings in ref B. In a briefing for allied, non-EU diplomats, the Dutch MFA expressed concern about Croatia's cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia (ICTY). Peter Jan Kleiweg de Zwaan, head of External-EU Affairs, noted that ICTY, the Balkans and FM Verhagen made a "deadly cocktail." Just as Verhagen opposed SerbQn integration with the EU due to a lack of cooperation with the ICTY, he will also maintain a firm line on Croatia. Verhagen will state that Croatia's failure to cooperate with the ICTY "should affect the tempo" of EU negotiations. "The EU needs to be tough on all, not just Serbia," said Kleiweg. Regarding Turkey, Verhagen sees EU accession as the goal and will be "strict but fair" about applying EU criteria. A number of Dutch political parties are concerned about Turkey's accession, but FM Verhagen has said he would "fight for" Turkish accession if it meets the EU's criteria.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Trade Policy -- The Dutch are uncertain of WTO Director General Lamy's plans but support a ministerial on December 15. Kleiweg said the Dutch believe negotiations failed most recently because of a disagreement between India and the United States over agricultural subsidies. A new agreement would benefit all countries.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Africa -- Also in the MFA briefing, Deputy EU Correspondent Rochus Pronk said the Dutch expect additional EU sanctions against Zimbabwe. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Development Minister Koenders' sees the cease-fire as fragile. The Dutch have agreed to provide 25 million

euros in humanitarian aid and 10 million euros to the UN Mission (MONUC) for transportation. The Dutch will not provide troops due to commitments in Chad and Afghanistan.

15. (C) Kosovo -- Pronk noted the agreement between the Serbs and Kosovars to move ahead with the EU deployment is positive, although tensions remain. The mission will be operational by December 9, creating "facts on the ground" in support of Kosovar independence and stability.

16. (SBU) Expanding Engagement -- The Dutch support EU efforts to deepen relations both with Pakistan, including through a summit, and with Israel. The GAERC will hold an "extensive debate" on the Middle East peace process, including on the update of an "action strategy." The Dutch support the current draft of the strategy, which provides for active engagement.

#### European Council

17. (C) Climate and Energy Package -- The Dutch expect the European Council to adopt a new climate and energy package, and they hope for an "ambitious" agreement. If the package is not adopted, said Kleiweg, he expected President Sarkozy might reconvene the EU in late December to ensure approval of the measure during the French presidency.

18. (SBU) European Economic Stimulus Package -- The Dutch support a European stimulus package but will urge caution in several areas. First, the Dutch want to ensure the Commission does propose "new money," because they are concerned about the impact on the EU budget. Second, they want to avoid "unhealthy subsidies." Third, the proposal to "frontload" the spending of structural funds needs to be well-managed and should reflect limits on the "absorptive capacity" for any spending.

19. (C) Security Strategy -- The Dutch see the new security strategy as "Solana's document." It is generally good, but would have been better if it were more strategic and operational. The Dutch hope the document will be adopted and hope it won't "get put in the drawer" and not used. Dutch priorities addressed in the strategy include increasing EU capacity, supporting the participation of and cooperation with neighboring states, and addressing partnerships with NATO and other key players.

CULBERTSON